



International Institute of Humanitarian Law  
Institut International de Droit Humanitaire  
Istituto Internazionale di Diritto Umanitario

in collaboration with



ICRC

47<sup>th</sup> ROUND TABLE ON CURRENT ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

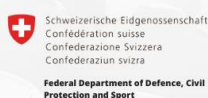
**“From the Battle of Solferino of 1859 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949:  
Challenges, and Future Prospects of International Humanitarian Law”**

*Villa Ormond, Sanremo (Italy), with live broadcasting online*

12-13 September 2024

PROGRAMME

*With the financial support of*





## Concept

### Background

The Battle of Solferino, fought on June 24, 1859, during the Second Italian War of Independence, marked a turning point in the history of warfare. Witness to the devastating humanitarian consequences of armed conflicts, particularly the suffering of wounded soldiers on the battlefield, Henry Dunant, a Swiss businessman, was inspired to initiate the humanitarian movement that led to the establishment of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and, eventually, the Geneva Conventions (GCs).

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 form the cornerstone of international humanitarian law (IHL), providing protection for the sick, wounded, and shipwrecked members of the armed forces, prisoners of war, and civilians during armed conflicts.

The Round Table aims to delve into the historical continuum from the Battle of Solferino to the codification of GCs in 1949, exploring the transformative journey of IHL from the Battle of Solferino to the Geneva Conventions, fostering a deeper understanding of the development of IHL and acknowledging the importance of humanitarian principles in shaping the landscape of modern conflict resolution and protection of vulnerable populations.

### Format

The Round Table will be structured as a series of thematic sessions, combining expert presentations, panel discussions, and interactive Q&A session. Emphasis will be placed on fostering dialogue and collaboration among participants. Approximately 30 minutes of each session will be devoted to Q&A. Questions will be collected both on-site and online.



## Agenda

(As of 28/08/2024)

Day 1

### REGISTRATION

#### Check-in & welcome coffee

12 September 2024, 9.00 am (Italian time).

Day 1

### OPENING

#### Opening ceremony

12 September 2024, 11.00 am (Italian time). The session will last 30 minutes.

##### Welcome address

- Alessandro Mager, *Mayor of Sanremo*
- Giorgio Battisti, *Lt. General (rtd), former Commanding General of the Italian Army Training and Doctrine Command; President, International Institute of Humanitarian Law*

##### Institutional message

- Sergio Mattarella, *President of the Italian Republic*

#### Opening session

12 September 2024, 11.35 am (Italian time). The session will last 25 minutes.

- Germano Bignotti, *Mayor of Solferino*
- *Representative of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation*
- Mirjana Spoljaric Egger, *President, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)*

##### Keynote speech

- Giuseppe Cavo Dragone, *Admiral, Chief of Defence, Italy; appointed Chair of the NATO Military Committee*

Day 1

### PANEL 1

#### Historical Scene Setter

12 September 2024, 12.00 pm (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.

The Battle of Solferino, fought on 24 June 1859, during the Second Italian War of Independence, marked a turning point in the history of warfare. Witness to the devastating humanitarian consequences of armed conflicts, particularly the suffering of wounded soldiers on the battlefield, Henry Dunant, a Swiss businessman, was inspired to initiate the humanitarian movement that led to the establishment of the International Committee of the Red



Cross (ICRC) and the Geneva Conventions. 2024 marks the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the very first Geneva Convention of 1864 and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the universally ratified 1949 Geneva Conventions. In light of the double anniversary, this panel will address the evolution and development of IHL over decades, the continued relevance and adaptability of IHL to the realities on the ground, and the need to work toward better implementation and compliance.

**Chair:** Gabriella Venturini, *Professor Emerita, University of Milan; Council Member, IIHL*

- François Bugnion, *former Director for International Law and member of ICRC Assembly; Member, IIHL*
- Arne Willy Dahl, *former Judge-Advocate General, Norwegian Armed Forces; Member, IIHL*
- Tania Ixchel Atilano, *Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Zurich*
- Giovanni Mantilla, *Associate Professor in the Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge*

### Lunch

1.30 pm (Italian time)

Day 1

PANEL 2

## **GC I: The First Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field: Advancements, Challenges, and Future Prospects of Humanitarian Law in Armed Conflict**

12 September 2024, 2.30 pm (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.

The First Geneva Convention of 1949 is inextricably linked with the very origins of international humanitarian law, the care for military wounded and sick, whether friend or foe, as well as the protection of military medical services from violence. Like the other three 1949 Conventions, in common Article 3, it also contains rules for non-international armed conflicts, including for the collection and care of wounded and sick, whether civilian or military. This panel will address legal and military-operational aspects on how to address contemporary challenges for the wounded and sick and medical services.

**Chair:** Darren Stewart OBE, *Brigadier General (rtd), British Army; former General Editor, United Kingdom Joint Service Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict; Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, UK Ministry of Defence; Council Member, IIHL*

- Leila Bourguiba, *Senior Legal Advisor, International Humanitarian Law and Migration, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)*
- Alexander Breitegger, *Senior Legal Adviser, ICRC*
- Geoffrey S. Corn, *Chair of Criminal Law and Director of the Center for Military Law and Policy, Texas Tech University School of Law; Council Member, IIHL*
- Giacomo Mammana, *Lt. General, Italian Army; Former Director of the Italian Army General Military Hospital "Celio", Rome*



Day 1

PANEL 3

**GC II: The Second Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea: Evolving Technological Developments in the Maritime Domain and the application of Humanitarian Law at Sea**

12 September 2024, 4.30 pm (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.

The Second Geneva Convention, with its comprehensive provisions, represents a significant milestone in the development of international humanitarian law, shaping the rules that govern the treatment of those at sea during times of armed conflict. The panel will provide an overview concerning the contemporary relevance of the Second Geneva Convention's provisions and will share insights on the challenges faced in upholding humanitarian law and the ongoing efforts to ensure the *continued* application of the Convention at sea.

**Chair:** Jan Peter Spijk, *Brigadier General (rtd), Royal Netherlands Army; Honorary President, International Society for Military Law and the Law of War; Council Member and Vice President, IIHL*

- Wolff Heintschel Von Heinegg, *Chair of Public Law, Europa-Universität Viadrina Frankfurt (Oder); President, International Society for Military Law and the Law of War; Member, IIHL*
- Anna Petrig, *Chair of International and Public Law, University of Basel; Member of the Swiss delegation to the IMO; Judge ad hoc, International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea*
- Yusuke Saito, *Captain, Legal Advisor, Japan Maritime Self Defence Force*
- Abby Zeith, *Legal Adviser, ICRC*
- Fausto Pocar, *Emeritus Professor, University of Milan; Honorary President, IIHL*

Day 1

PANEL 4

**GC III: Contemporary Issues related to the Third Geneva Convention and the Protection of POWs in International Armed Conflicts**

12 September 2024, 6.00 pm (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.

The detailed rules of the Third Geneva Convention have stood the test of time. This panel will highlight the key provisions by exploring the fundamental principles of the GCIII, emphasizing those related to the humane treatment and protection of prisoners of war. The rest of the panel will be devoted to the contemporary legal and practical challenges which impact the implementation of the Convention. It will address certain trends in conflict and their implications by exploring new scenarios of modern warfare and analyze the potential impact of these trends on the protection of prisoners of war under GCIII.

**Chair:** Marja Lehto, *Ambassador (International Legal Affairs), Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Finland; Council member and Vice President, IIHL*

- Alice Edwards, *UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*
- Ramin Mahnad, *Senior Legal Advisor, ICRC*



- Gilbert Mittawa, *Colonel, Chief of Legal Services, Malawi Defence Force*
- Jelena Pejic, *Nonresident Senior Fellow, Lieber Institute for Law and Warfare, West Point, Lieber Scholar for 2023; Member, IIHL*

#### **Institutional message**

*12 September 2024, 7.30 pm (Italian time)*

*Carrie F. Ricci, Army General Counsel, US Army*

#### **Welcome cocktail offered by the President of the Sanremo Institute**

*12 September 2024, 7.45 pm Villa Ormond*

Day 2

#### **PANEL 5**

### **GC IV: The Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War: The Cornerstone of Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflicts**

*13 September 2024, 9 am (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.*

The detailed rules of GCIV remain pertinent 75 years after their adoption. The problems for which GCIV tries to provide solutions remain salient in today's armed conflicts, in particular for the protection of the civilian population, including in occupied territory. This panel will outline the key provisions by exploring the fundamental principles of the GCIV, emphasizing those related to humane treatment, non-discrimination, protection of women, children, and elderly, as well as the protection of civilian infrastructures. It will go on to address the protection of civilian persons in times of war, including in non-international armed conflicts, and highlighting the ongoing challenges and complexities faced in upholding the Convention's principles in current armed conflicts.

**Chair:** *Eva Svoboda, Head of Policy, Research and Humanitarian Diplomacy Division, ICRC*

- Houda Chalchoul, *Senior Legal Officer, UNHCR*
- Mikhail Orkin, *Legal Advisor, Commentaries Update Unit, ICRC*
- Marten Zwanenburg, *Professor of Military Law, Netherlands Defense Academy and University of Amsterdam*

Day 2

#### **PANEL 6**

### **Outlook Towards the Future**

*13 September 2024, 11 am (Italian time). The session will last 90 minutes.*

The Geneva Conventions have endured for 75 years, and their ongoing relevance is regrettably on display in armed conflicts around the world. Yet, the Conventions – and IHL more broadly – are under visible strain. Noncompliance with clear rules, narrow interpretations of the law's protective scope, and an unwillingness by states to fully pressure one another to comply are all contributing to the potential erosion of a universally endorsed body of law. This panel will identify some of the keys to safeguarding the future of the Geneva Conventions. It will examine what needs to be done to secure better compliance with the law and maintain its credibility. It will



look at where the law may need to be adapted in light of new technologies, new actors, and the changing nature of warfare. The panel will finally generate ideas for how military and civilian practitioners can contribute to maintaining the solidity of the Conventions over the coming decades.

**Chair:** Carl Marchand, *Colonel, Head, IHL and Human Rights Section, Swiss Armed Forces; Council Member and Vice President, IIHL*

- Abby Zeith, *Legal Adviser, ICRC*
- Nathalie Durhin, *Colonel, French Army, Cadre Professeur de Groupe, Ecole de Guerre*
- Yvette Issar, *Founding Director, The Olerai Lab*
- Michael N. Schmitt, *Professor of International Law, University of Reading; G. Norman Lieber Distinguished Scholar, Lieber Institute, US Military Academy, West Point; Charles H. Stockton Distinguished Scholar in Residence, US Naval War College; Member, IIHL*

Day 2

**CLOSING**

### Final session

13 September 2024, 12.30 pm (Italian time). The session will last 30-45 minutes.

#### Closing address

- Jean-Pierre François Renaud Lacroix, *UN Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations*

#### Concluding remarks

- Giorgio Battisti, *Lt. General (rtd), former Commanding General of the Italian Army Training and Doctrine Command; President, IIHL*
- Eva Svoboda, *Head of Policy, Research and Humanitarian Diplomacy Division, ICRC*

### Lunch & depart

13 September 2024, 1.15 pm (Italian time)

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